

UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 03-6562**

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BENJAMIN HUGH HAMMONDS,

Petitioner - Appellant,

versus

GENE M. JOHNSON, Director of the Virginia  
Department of Corrections,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern  
District of Virginia, at Norfolk. Raymond A. Jackson, District  
Judge. (CA-02-598-2)

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Submitted: July 8, 2003

Decided: July 16, 2003

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Before WILKINSON, MICHAEL, and TRAXLER, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Benjamin Hugh Hammonds, Appellant Pro Se. Amy L. Marshall, OFFICE  
OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF VIRGINIA, Richmond, Virginia, for  
Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.  
See Local Rule 36(c).

PER CURIAM:

Benjamin Hugh Hammonds seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his petition filed under 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (2000). The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1) (2000). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2000). A prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that his constitutional claims are debatable and that any dispositive procedural rulings by the district court are also debatable or wrong. See Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, \_\_\_, 123 S. Ct. 1029, 1040 (2003); Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); Rose v. Lee, 252 F.3d 676, 683 (4th Cir.), cert. denied, 534 U.S. 941 (2001). We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Hammonds has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal. We deny his motion to proceed on appeal in forma pauperis and dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before the court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED